God connects donated ambulance to ministry that needed it

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John LaNoue, president of Amigos Internacionales and veteran leader with Texas Baptist Men, delivers a donated ambulance to Tillie Burgin, executive director of Mission Arlington/Mission Metroplex, which will use it as a mobile clinic to meet the medical needs of poor people in Arlington. (PHOTO/ Courtesy of Jim Burgin, Mission Arlington/Mission Metroplex)

John LaNoue, president of Amigos Internacionales and veteran leader with Texas Baptist Men, delivers a donated ambulance to Tillie Burgin, executive director of Mission Arlington/Mission Metroplex, which will use it as a mobile clinic to meet the medical needs of poor people in Arlington. (PHOTO/ Courtesy of Jim Burgin, Mission Arlington/Mission Metroplex)

John Rutledge

ARLINGTON—Ask John LaNoue if he wants donated equipment—or nearly anything else—for ministry, and he almost always says "yes."

"It's my junk for Jesus program," said LaNoue, the veteran disaster relief leader with Texas Baptist Men who built the first Baptist disaster relief mobile unit more than 40 years ago, as well as multiple mobile clinics for Texas Baptists' River Ministry.

So, when a man from the Houston area called to say he bought an ambulance and wanted it to go somewhere it could be used to help a lot of people, LaNoue immediately accepted it.

He just didn't know at that point where God wanted to use it.

As president of Amigos Internacionales, a nonprofit nongovernmental organization that seeks to meet humanitarian and missionary needs globally, LaNoue contacted his board and asked them to pray about it.

Initially, they thought it might be used in the Philippines after a typhoon hit, but that didn't work out. Neither did a missions opportunity in Mexico or any other international ministry.

"The Lord kept shutting the door," LaNoue said.

Recently, LaNoue delivered about 2,100 donated books to Tillie Burgin, executive director of Mission Arlington/Mission Metroplex. After unloading the books and visiting with Burgin, just as he was preparing to bid farewell, he asked her to pray with him about finding a home for the donated ambulance.

Burgin told him Mission Arlington desperately needed an ambulance, since the ministry responds to healthcare needs among the city's homeless population and provides ongoing medical service to residents of low-income apartment complexes.

So, less than a week after Thanksgiving, LaNoue delivered the ambulance to Mission Arlington, where the ministry will use it as a mobile clinic to meet needs among poor people in its community.

"The Lord had a plan," Burgin said.

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